

REMARKS

The application has been amended so as to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Prior to this amendment claims 1-15 were pending with claims 1 and 15 being independent. This amendment amends one of the originally filed claims and adds new claims 21-25, claim 22 being independent.

The Official Action objected to claim 14 due to an informality. Responsively, claim 14 has been amended.

The Official Action rejected claims 1-6 and 10-15 under §102 as anticipated by FRIEDRICH 6,227,752.

The Official Action rejected claims 7-9 over this same reference.

The anticipation rejection is not believed to be viable as the reference does not include the recited annular groove. The Official Action has identified the edge between thicker cylindrical portion 14 of reference Figure 3 and smaller cylindrical portion 14c as the groove. The term groove cannot in any reasonable way be read on this edge. See the attached dictionary definition concerning the term groove.

In view of the reference failing to teach a groove as recited, the anticipation rejection is not believed to be viable. In contrast, the reference teaches a securing method which comprises a pin element 16 being inserted through holes 12a and 14e. Accordingly, for this reason alone, independent claims 1

and 15 should be allowed.

Further, it appears that the Official Action has only considered part of the recitations of claim 15. See that the invention allows that the end of a tube (or other connector device) may be "loosely" secured to the connector device such that it can be rotated relative to the connector device while simultaneously, axial separation is prevented. Please refer to claim 15, the portion of the recitations found on page 16 of the application as filed.

In contrast to the present invention, the FRIEDRICH second member 12 can be locked in only one position relative to the first member 11, that position being dictated by the positions of the respective holes 12a and 14e. Rotation of member 12 relative to connector 14 is possible only prior to inserting a fastener through holes 12a and 14e. Until the fastener is inserted axially, separation is not prevented. Accordingly, the applied reference does not meet the recitations found in claim 15.

Also as to the recitation of an annular groove not reading on the applied reference, see the final recitation that the annular groove is provided axially inwards from the distal end of the stem portion. In the applied reference no such annular groove is provided.

For these further reasons the pending rejections are not believed to be viable and it is believed that the originally

filed claims should be allowed.

This amendment adds further claims for consideration. These claims are also believed to patentably recite the invention and their allowance is therefore solicited.

In view of the above, applicant believes that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early indication of the same is respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to claim 14. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE".

Respectfully submitted,

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